

Octane

Fuelling the passion

LETTER OF THE MONTH



Rare glimpse of AC's flat-six

I HAVE BELATEDLY just finished reading 'Killed by the Cobra' [the story of AC's early-60s MA 200 prototype, *Octane* 102], only to realise that my thoughts had been transported back to the 1950s and on into the '60s, when I was a teenager. During those years, I was privileged to visit the AC works at Thames Ditton.

At that time, my parents, my elder brother and I lived with my maternal grandmother. My mother's eldest brother, who was known as Jock, was married to Joyce Hurlock and worked for her father – 'Old Man Hurlock' – at AC Cars Ltd.

My uncle would regularly make the trek from Esher to visit his infirm mother in South London and, as he worked for a manufacturer of cars, he would borrow whatever happened to be at the works at the time. As a result, all kinds of gleaming AC cars could be seen periodically outside our house, much to the envy of the neighbouring children. We boys

would sit and listen with rapt attention to Uncle Jock relating news of the latest and fastest.

When the occasion arose for a return trip with him, there was no need for my uncle to ask us twice. So it was that in 1964 or thereabouts I found myself in the foyer of the works looking at 6000 PE. On this particular visit, I remember meeting the man who was responsible for welding together the chassis that were destined for 7.0-litre Cobras.

I was given a tour around 6000 PE by my uncle, and when I remarked on its odd-looking engine I was told it was the experimental flat-six that AC had been working on, but which they were now not going to make.

While time distorts memories, I do remember that visit as if it were yesterday. I wonder whether any evidence remains in the car of the boxer engine being fitted to it – and where that engine is today?

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